
NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board
www.boatoregon.com
Oregon's Recreational Boating Agency



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Safe Boating Tips

Always wear your life jacket

According to Coast Guard statistics, in 2007, 476 boaters died from drowning and 427 of them were not wearing life jackets. Those lives could have been saved, if the victims had simply worn life jackets.

Know the rules of the waterway

Seventy percent of boating accidents are caused by operator errors, such as carelessness, recklessness, inexperience, excessive speed and lack of attention. Taking a safe boating course is an inexpensive, yet valuable way to become a safe boater. Most Insurance companies also offer a 15 percent discount to boaters who have a boater education card.

Boat sober

Alcohol's effects on judgment, vision, balance and coordination are amplified on the water, increasing the chances of being involved in a boating accident. Plus, boating under the influence of intoxicants (BUII) is illegal in Oregon –a Class A misdemeanor. Officers can also arrest boaters for observed impairment below 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Boaters with a 0.08% BAC immediately lose boating privileges and will pay a hefty, \$6,250 fine.

Prepare your boat before you launch

With new blended fuels, a few extra precautions need to be taken such as adding a fuel stabilizer and making sure your fuel filter is clean before you head out to the launch ramp. Keep spare fuel filters on hand, and if using E-10, be sure to run it through your tank. Don't keep a full tank of blended gasoline –damage can occur to the motor.

Be aware of carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that is lethal. The most common way to be exposed to CO gas is when a passenger hangs onto the rear of the boat or swimming platform to body surf — known as “teak surfing.” Teak surfing can be deadly and is now illegal in Oregon. Early symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, nausea, dizziness and irritated eyes. The onset of these symptoms is extremely fast, and “teak surfers” can sink into the water before anyone realizes what happened. It's now believed that previously recorded drownings may have actually been caused by CO poisoning.

Boating courtesy

Always operate your boat at a safe speed and at a safe distance from the shore. Watch your wake because it can damage boats and docks and contributes to bank erosion. Keep a look out for other boaters — drive defensively. When launching your boat, have a defined role for each passenger and load your gear before you back down the launch ramp. Be efficient when trailering and launching to prevent bottle-necks at the launch ramp.

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For more information about boating safety, contact Ashley Massey,
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